



# The Impact of City Branding strategies on the Visibility of The City Identity

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## Abstract

*In response to the homogenizing effects of globalization and technological progress, cities worldwide have increasingly embraced city branding as a strategy to safeguard their unique character, identity, and essence, thereby transforming themselves into globally recognized brands.*

*While practicing the city branding strategies some cities ignore its identity and unique features and just focus on what the world trend goes to just apply and achieve profits on any scale .*

*The research starts with a comprehensive examination of existing literature in the field then the definitions and history of the identity and place identity then the city branding strategies literature review, history and definitions ends with discussing the relation between these two parts.*

*This research method is descriptive qualitative by exploring the definitions and dimensions of city branding that meets the city identity components which in turn affect the city to uniqueness while competing to be seen and achieve its visual identity locally and globally .*

**Keywords:** City branding strategies, City identity, Visual identity, place branding.

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## 1. Introduction

In an era characterized by rapid globalization and technological advancements, urban areas have sought distinctive strategies to assert their uniqueness, competitiveness, and attractiveness. city branding has emerged as a prominent global phenomenon, transcending geographical boundaries, and gaining paramount significance for cities worldwide. This research delves into the dynamic realm of urban branding, with a specific focus on its implications for city identity and recognition. Cities, once confined by geographical borders, are now thrust into the global arena. As they navigate the complex currents of global openness and technological development, cities encounter challenges that demand an astute response.

The proliferation of cities has led to unintended consequences—repetition and mimicry among urban environments, often at the expense of their intrinsic character and identity. The need to reassert a city's distinctiveness and resonate as a global brand has become imperative. In this context, the research problem crystallizes: How can city branding strategies revitalize the identity of cities, enabling them to stand out in the global landscape? This question compels us to examine the impact of city branding on a city's identity and, subsequently, its ability to compete, attract investment, and foster

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cultural preservation. The primary objective of this research is to shed light on exploring the relation between the city branding and the city identity .

## 2. Identity & Place Identity

### 2.1 identity

There are many Arabic and foreign writings in research and studies that deal with the identity topic; however, since identity can be expressed or embodied through language, religion, or the national or national state, it is more of an ideological concept than a scientific one, making it impossible to define precisely and definitively. Since each of these traits varies depending on how they are used, prepared, and employed, a society can adapt its identity to fit various historical eras and governmental conditions(1988, عايد).

Identity is defined as “the common characteristics that distinguish and cherish a particular group of people, or it is a collection of cultural and ideological ideas about a group that are connected to human history, origins, and philosophical concepts that produced moral and intellectual behavior that was translated into values, artwork, and folklore, giving that group a unique identity(2011, ابو عزة ، محمد)”. Therefore, identity is the sum of the special spiritual, intellectual, and emotional characteristics that distinguish a particular society, its ways of life, its customs, value and belief systems, economic production techniques, and legal framework.

### 2.2 Place identity

The formation of place identity is a process of shaping territorial boundaries, symbolism, and institutions (Peng et al.,2020). Place consciousness can be strengthened during that process. Perceptions and understanding of the place identity of a place are often interpreted in narratives or discourses. Discourses about place identity are representations of claimants’ memories of the past, images of the present, and often, utopias of the future(Paasi, 2001).And as shown in (fig.1) relationship between people, place, and place identity came through people’s interaction with a place, the place influences and subsequently constitutes people’s social (collective) and personal (individual) identity.

The place identity contents and dimensions were summarized into four major dimensions that gives the meanings of place identity depending on Paasi’s work (the social and personal identity theories) as shown in table 1 (Nario-Redmond et al., 2004).

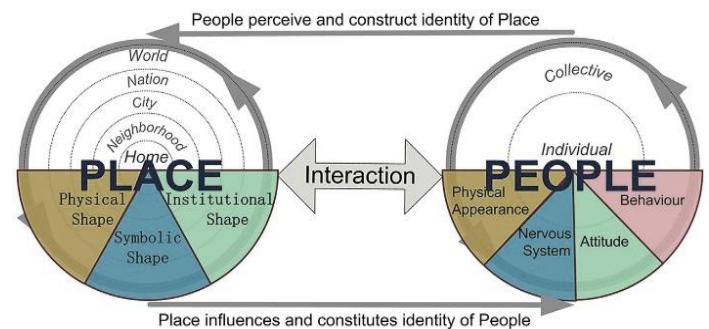


Fig. 1 place identity creation

Source:[https://www.frontiersin.org/files/Articles/503569/fpsyg-11-00294-HTML/image\\_m/fpsyg-11-00294-g009.jpg](https://www.frontiersin.org/files/Articles/503569/fpsyg-11-00294-HTML/image_m/fpsyg-11-00294-g009.jpg)

**Table 1: Quadrantal dimensions of the meanings of place identity**

	External looks	Internal thoughts
<b>People</b>	Physical appearance (e.g., dress, hair, skin); Behavior (e.g., dialect, diet, traditional practice, skill)	Attitude (e.g., patriot, goal, preference); Feeling (e.g., importance of elements of a place to self, identification with places of different spatial scales)
<b>Place</b>	Physical shape (e.g., territory, landscape, building, land use); Symbolic shape (e.g., landmark, dialect, name of the place, boundary on the map); Institutional shape (e.g., government, firm, neighbourhood)	Individual perception (e.g., place boundary in mind, representative elements of a place in mind, holistic image of a place); Collective perception (e.g., place marketing, discourse about a place)

Source :[https://www.frontiersin.org/files/Articles/503569/fpsyg-11-00294-HTML/image\\_m/fpsyg-11-00294-g010.jpg](https://www.frontiersin.org/files/Articles/503569/fpsyg-11-00294-HTML/image_m/fpsyg-11-00294-g010.jpg)

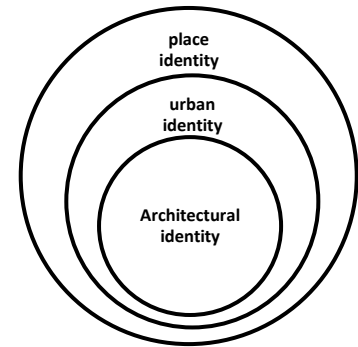
And according to dr. Gover\* The place Identity expands to refer to the relationship of communication, belonging, and the group’s satisfaction with the formulation of their urban environment. It is a comprehensive framework that includes urban identity and architectural identity, as they are considered among its elements. The concept of place identity: “what the place contains of distinctive and unique features, meanings, and the culture that was in it in Given time.”(Govers & Go, 2012)then the elements affecting the identity of a place (fig.2):

- The tangible dimension: includes the natural environment, including geographical factors, climatic factors, and the built environment.
- The intangible dimension: includes cultural symbols and implicit values of society.

The place at the beginning of its formation depends on the identity and culture of the community, it was founded as a response to the needs of this community in all ways (the details of architectural, urban and interior design) so the identity of the place expresses it in its material elements, its built or natural environment, and its non-physical elements that express the original inhabitants of the place of cultures, activities, meanings, symbols, history and others)( عزوز ، خلود، 2014). Architectural Identity(Abel, 1996). They are the features and characteristics that distinguish buildings in their interior and exterior design, the details and architectural elements of the exterior. The comprehensive framework of architectural identity is the buildings. Abel defined it as having a special essence that is the perfect continuous harmony between form, culture, place and climate.

Urban Identity: They are the clear features that distinguish places and make them easier to recognize and even their mental image in people's memory. They are the environment whose identity depends on a special activity and the users always interact with them. We find that the comprehensive framework of urban identity is cities with their buildings, streets, public spaces and everything that gives the environment its distinctive character.

It was found that architectural identity contributes to urban identification as one of its elements but does not exist. Urban identity is divided into automatic identity not directed in traditional environments and targeted identity.



**Fig. 2 shows the relation between place identity, urban identity & architectural identity.**  
Source : <https://issuu.com/monaabdel-ghafar/docs>

\* <https://placebrandobserver.com/robert-govers/> (Robert Govers is a senior partner at Anholt & Co, an independent international scholar, speaker and author on the reputation of cities, regions and countries.)

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### 2.3 City's Visual Identity

The visual identity started as a practice to serve institutions and companies and defined as “a visual means to define and distinguish institutions and companies from each other as it expresses its activity, beliefs and philosophy through several elements, including branding, prints, and extends to employee fashion and interior design of the place” (Woodham, 2009), Then the visual identity evolved to include places and extended to include the entire city and express it, the visual identity of cities differs from the visual identity of institutions the visual identity of cities and countries is not sellable, and cities do not need to build a visual identity program from scratch due to the presence of a preconceived image of them in the receiving public, but despite that, we find that the visual identity of cities is more complex, and the construction and management of the visual identity of cities differs as it is not saleable and tradeable (Faanes, 2014).

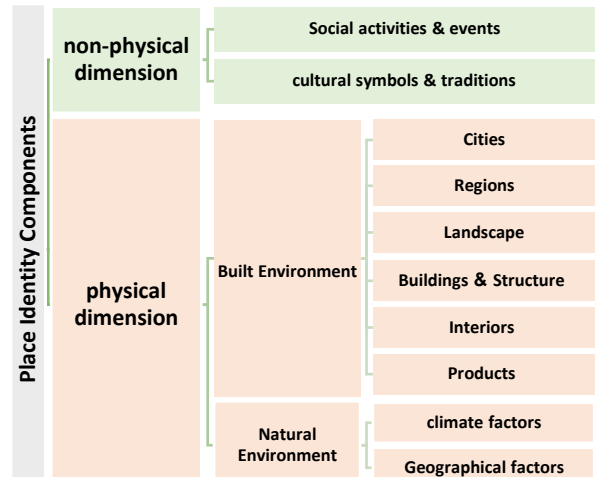


Fig. 3: place identity components  
Source: the researcher depends on Hassan, M.

- Cities are difficult to modify their visual image and people's impressions about because they are more stable and profound because of their cultural and historical heritage.
- It is also difficult to create a visual identity for the city because of its historical, geographical and social dimension that affects its image with the recipient.

City visual identity defined as “the visual use of the values and characteristics that expresses the city’s geographical, historical, social, economic, religious, heritage and environmental character to highlight its indefinite features and deliver a visual message that attracts the public. This is the reason behind attracting the public to attract the visual city.” (2017, حلمى، أحمد).

The city's visual identity can be considered a visual expression of community economic, environmental, social and political control. It also continues to search for an image of values and personality, targeting a specific group of audience that it reaches to attract them and create a visual image that is useful to them (Morgan et al., 2020). And as the visual identity focuses on the place and its component to make it unique and visible, it’s inevitable to study the place components and the place identity components. The importance of the city visual identity appears as following (2017, حلمى، أحمد)

- Transform strategy, personality and culture into a visual image of the public.
- Help the Republic to stand out Get to know the city.
- Create trust in the recipient audience by making an impression.
- Expression of strength of personality and unity which creates a sense of loyalty.
- Create and promote a positive mental image in the public.
- Supporting image and reputation enhancing the status of competitors
- Achieving the entity's marketing objectives

To sum up, the city’s visual identity is a mix between the people’s perceptions and experience in the city and the city’s image. The image of the city is a main component that affects the efficiency of the visual identity of the city.

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## 2.4 City Image

The success of the city's image depends on the three main components as shown in (fig.4), which seem a simple picture, but it is more complicated because of the finer details. Where people accommodate the place in the same way as any other brand, the place in the city consists in people's minds through impressions and images of the city that play a crucial and fundamental role in choosing the city as a destination to visit and according to Dr. Mona Halami 2008, the city's image depends on three main elements(Helmy, 2008):

- The identity of the city from an urban fabric, the formation of the city, its heritage, culture, people, etc.
- the Visual image: It is actually seen through personal experience and received directly through the experience within the city
- The branded image :which was specially designed for a place and used with it various means of communication and media.

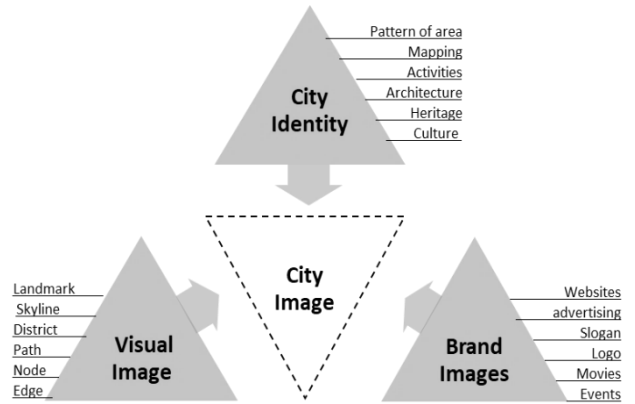


Fig. 4:a modified schematic drawing of the city image component  
Source: the researcher based on Helmy, M. 2008

The image of the city is seen in the improvement and demonstration of the value and distinction of the place through the final image, so the images are required to be honest and represent reality and truth. The image of the Brand Image and the visual image are considered as complementary elements. The visual image is the image that you make and shape. But the image of the brand refers to the message promoted to convey a particular image and label. Understanding the city's distinctive image depends on the balanced relationship between Brand Image and Image Visual and the link between place identity .

## 3. Place Branding & City Branding

### 3.1 Place Branding

Place branding is commonly understood as the general phenomenon of marketing, branding, promoting and regeneration of a particular city, region and or location(Lucarelli & Brorström, 2013).Place branding (including city, destination, rural, nation and regional branding) is developed from urban policies, tourism and marketing as the origin domains, while place promotion and marketing are the domains for development(Hankinson, 2015). At the beginning of the nineties of the twentieth century, the visual brand of the city " urban branding " appeared, shifting attention to the presentation of the specificities of local identity without considering demand, then the city was forced to transform from a productive city to a city that seeks to satisfy visitors only, and is sold as a commodity with its tangible and intangible heritage, which led to the destruction of a large part of the architectural components of many cities to meet the desires of investors (Aboukhater et al., 2022).‘Urban branding strategies are not limited to the promotion of the city image, but it extends more, to change it into an urban experience for the interest of investors, politicians, real estate and construction projects, planners, architects, and other groups that stand to profit from enhancing the role of their cities’(Helmy, 2013).

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### 3.2 City Branding

“City branding means the main things that should people know about certain place”(Unsworth, 2008). The process of brand creation requires media-generated imagery; branding of urban projects; and branding of city life, historical buildings, signature architecture, and the overall form of the city branding defined as a strategic process that involves creating and managing a unique identity and image for a city(Braun & Zenker, 2010).

city branding aim is to differentiate the city from other destinations and create a compelling message that resonates with the target audience. City branding is a long-term process that requires a comprehensive strategy and a commitment to building the city’s brand and reputation(Govers & Go, 2012). So, City branding act as a strategic instrument with a strong clear vision and defined goals that promotes the city’s competitive advantages, and it’s a practice to market the city’s history quality of place natural & cultural resources social opportunities and attractions lifestyle To Express the identity of the city refers to the unique characteristics, values, and culture that define a city and differentiate it from other destinations(Nosier & Badawy, 2024).

According to the study shown in table (2) by ProQuest (ABI/INFORM) database that was utilized to present a review to the literature of city branding, using the terms ‘city branding’ and ‘destination branding’ from 2005 through December 2016, as the review of the literature suggests the first traces of publications documenting 'city branding' studies appeared on 2005(Irisi & Ariana, 2017). This study came out with the dimensions & elements that affect the city brand.

These dimensions varied between tangible elements, intangible elements, festivals, positive & negative assets, lifestyle, people, activities, facilities, built environment, greenness, atmosphere, nature, Architectural historical places, cultural ethnic diversity, industry, leisure time activity, night life, diversity, population and physical aspects of the city, brand personality, employment and business, Societies, recreation, Urbanity, holistic image, theme of the city.... All these dimensions will be distributed through the city branding strategies.

According to the previous study of the city identity components fig(3) and the previous table (2) it was found that most of the city branding dimensions were common with the city identity components. So, the city identity can be branded ,visualized and revitalized through applying the city branding strategies and by using the place identity components to achieve the city visual identity.

### 3.3 City Branding Strategies

City branding is the "main information should be known about the city", which is the process of creating a brand for the city that requires images created by media; Marketing of urban businesses; Marketing of city life, historic buildings, unique architecture and the overall shape of the city, and all this is done through the city branding strategies(Unsworth, 2008).

the city branding strategies varies but this research focused on the following strategies only, branding location (nature, settings, architecture & projects)(Helmy, 2013).branding business (competitiveness, services & infrastructure) branding City life (events, Attractions, lifestyle ,cultural activities & heritage and there was a more detailed classification in which the strategies used were media-generated imagery; branding of urban projects; and branding of city life, historical buildings, signature architecture, and the overall form of the city(Rehan, 2014) by merging the previous mentioned branding strategies into eight strategies as shown in fig(5).

Fig. 5: A modified city branding strategies graph.

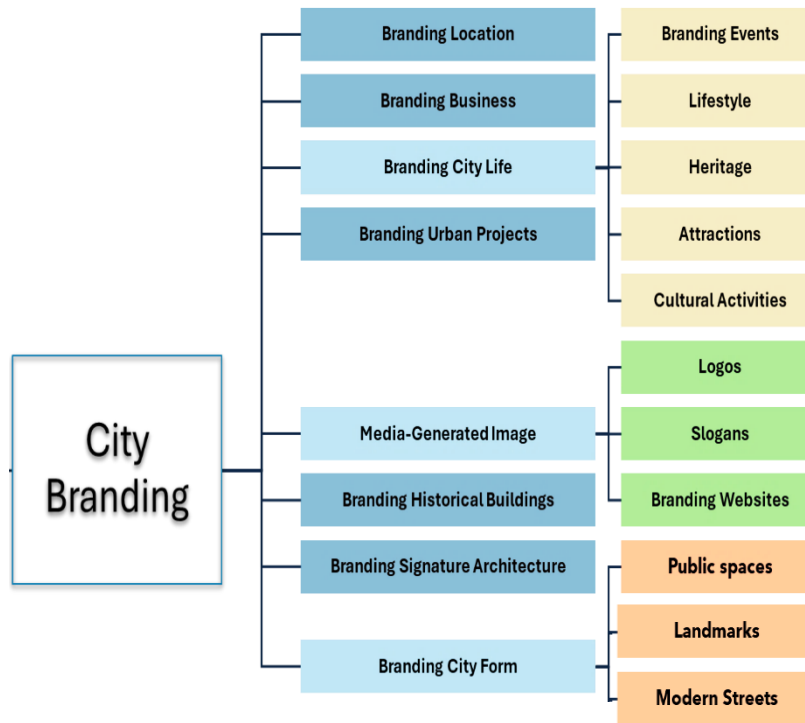
Table 2:results of the ProQuest database show the city branding dimensions.

Source	Year	Brand Dimensions/Elements
Parkerson and Saunders	(2004)	Tangible elements (culture, history, shopping, infrastructure, housing and business) Intangible elements
Kerr and Johnson	(2005)	Positive and negative assets Festivals Tourist Accommodation Sport/lifestyle
Hankinson	(2005)	Economic Physical environment Activities and facilities Brand attitudes People
Laaksonen et al.	(2006)	Nature Industry Culture Built environment Atmosphere
Trueman et al.	(2007)	Positive assets Negative assets Greenness
Cheng and Taylor	(2007)	Architecture Historical places Cultural and Ethnic Diversity Leisure time activities Buzz
Vanolo	(2008)	Art Diversity Nightlife
Herstein and Jaffe	(2008)	City's population aspect City's physical aspects
De Carlo et al.	(2009)	Brand Symbols Brand Personality Culture
Vaidya et al.	(2009)	Brand Personality People Employment and Business Culture and Lifestyle
Zenker et al.	(2009)	Job chances Nature and recreation Urbanity and diversity
Baxter and Kerr	(2010)	Brand Personality Likes and Dislikes Cognitive images
Prayag	(2010)	Affective images Holistic images
Clark et al.	(2010)	12 themes (Young/Energized/ Nostalgic/Alive/Liberated/ Creative/Cool/Savvy/Inspired/ Eclectic/Vibrant/Dynamic)
Utinbasak and Yalci	(2010)	Brand Image Museums
Northover	(2010)	Brand Identity
Kalandides	(2011)	Descriptive brand image
Hayden and Sevin	(2012)	Brand Identity Cultural Identity Logo transformation
Pinzaru	(2012)	City Brand Hexagon Model dimensions (presence/place/pre-requisites/people/pulse/potential)
Yuwo et al.	(2013)	Brand Image Brand Awareness Brand Quality Brand Loyalty

Source: Kasapi, Irisi & Cela, Ariana

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**Fig. 5: A modified city branding strategies graph.**

**Source: researcher based on Helmy, M. ,2008 & Rehan, R,2014**

### 3.3.1 (Branding Location):

Branding Location is strategic promotion of the city's geographical location and its potential advantages. This approach highlights the city's unique position as a crossroads between different regions and its central location within a specific geographical area, and by effectively marketing these aspects, the city can position itself as the center of various activities and industries. Branding Location depends on the geographical location of the city, which gives it strategic importance among the surrounding countries for its natural resources, special climate, characteristics and location.

Example (Dubai): Dubai, as a prime example, has mastered the art of promoting its geographical location, has consistently emphasized its strategic importance as a focal point between East and West, and occupies a central role within the Gulf region. Dubai's strategic position has been widely used to promote growth in various sectors, including tourism, trade and commercial activities, making Dubai an internationally recognized city.

### 3.3.2 Branding Business:

The strategic diversification of the city's economy and its position as a thriving business hub is a critical approach to urban branding methodologies as this strategy underscores the city's commitment to economic growth, infrastructure development, and the creation of a welcoming environment for global companies. Its application depends on the wise direction and vision of the country, which takes advantage of opportunities to attract investment and transforms carefully studied plans for a leader in business and thrives economically and politically to draw the world's attention to it.

Example (Dubai): Dubai has implemented a multifaceted strategy, with a strong focus on economic diversification. The City's success in attracting global companies to its shores is based on initiatives such as free zones and foreign land ownership, facilitating substantial FDI. Key sectors such as real estate, construction, banks, insurance and others have grown significantly. Ambitious projects such as the expansion of Dubai International Airport, the development of Jebel Ali International Airport and the redevelopment of the World Trade Centre in Dubai are notable examples of Dubai's commitment to sustain its economic growth.

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### **3.3.3 Branding City Life:**

Branding City Life by promoting the city's cultural events and activities is essential to maintaining a dynamic and attractive urban image. By constantly displaying an eventful calendar, the city can position itself as a vibrant cultural center. Its application depends on five basic elements associated with the city: its lifestyle, city-related events, history, attractions and cultural and heritage activities.

Example (Stuttgart): Stuttgart prides itself on its cultural vitality, manifested through a wide range of international events and festivals throughout the year. From elaborate Christmas celebrations to the Easter Festival in February and the vibrant Stuttgart Spring Festival in May, the city's event calendar is filled with activities that meet diverse tastes. These events not only promote Stuttgart's cultural identity, but also greatly improve its image as a vibrant and culturally rich city.

### **3.3.4 Branding Urban Projects:**

The city's image can be profoundly shaped by urban development projects and transformation efforts. Using superior descriptions to emphasize the size and impact of these projects is a common practice in this strategy. It relies on building cultural projects that are influential in society and distinct and exploiting the city's components to develop more of them.

Example (Stuttgart): The ambitious Stuttgart 21 project is a prime example of the city's dedication to development and urban transformation. This completed in 2021, is one of Germany's most comprehensive urban renewal projects and aims to revolutionize the traditional appearance of the city in line with the fast-track development. Although the project faces some opposition, it remains an integral part of Stuttgart's identity and brand, demonstrating its commitment to modernization.

### **3.3.5 Media-Generated Image:**

Cities often use various forms of media, including postcards, advertising campaigns, television reports, films, documentaries, city publications, and websites, to formulate and promote their distinctive urban image. Marketing, publicity and advertising of the city are concerned with natural and abnormal attractions to attract visitors and investors.

Example (Budapest): Budapest has taken a systematic approach in shaping its urban image through media-generated images. The city has developed a comprehensive printing guide, showing the visual elements of its official logo and how it should be consistently used in all municipal institutions. The use of official colors, such as red, yellow and blue, enhances Budapest's visual identity in various forms of media.

### **3.3.6 Branding Historical Buildings:**

Branding historic buildings includes leveraging the city's cultural heritage and architectural monuments to enhance its identity and attract tourists. This approach is reflected in both Stuttgart and Edinburgh. It relies on the support of historic buildings and related elements for restoration, advertising and publicity and is used to express and distinguish the city.

Example: In Stuttgart, the city promotes itself as a cultural destination by highlighting famous buildings such as the Opera House, the Castle of Residence, and the new palace. These historic buildings are strategically designed to attract tourists looking for a glimpse of the city's vibrant past.

Example: Edinburgh uses a confident and contemporary strategy for the city's brand that does not shy away from its remarkable history and built heritage. The city embraces its historical significance while presenting itself as a modern and forward-looking urban center. This strategy aims to attract visitors interested in experiencing a mix of contemporary history and culture in the heart of Scotland.

### **3.3.7 Branding Signature Architecture:**

Branding Signature Architecture often revolves around attracting renowned architects to design buildings and landmarks that serve as symbols of the city. It relies on the support of distinctive architecture and its exploitation of marketing for the city.

Example (Dubai): Dubai has emerged as an attraction for world-renowned architects such as Zaha Hadid. These architects have provided their expertise to create prominent structures such as the Opera House and the Dubai Museum, dancing dream towers, and OPUS towers. These architectural wonders redraw the skyline of Dubai and play a pivotal role in its brand by offering distinctive and unique features.

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### **3.3.8 Branding City Form:**

Strengthening the shape of the city, which includes public spaces, parks, monuments, libraries, museums and modern streets, is an essential aspect of urban brands. Collectively, these elements contribute to the city's appeal and public image. It depends on the city's planning, coordination, identity, modernity, infrastructure and luxury to attract the world to it.

Example (Stuttgart): Stuttgart boasts a range of public spaces, parks and monuments, such as the "Stefftskirch Church", founded in the 12th century. These historical and contemporary assets greatly enrich the city's identity. Moreover, modern streets such as King Street, designed for pedestrians, create a welcoming atmosphere for social activities and community gatherings, enhancing the overall shape and appeal of Stuttgart City.

## **4. Discussion: Exploring the relation between place identity & city branding strategies**

This research has explored the multifaceted relationship between city branding and urban identity, emphasizing the critical role of branding in differentiating cities in an increasingly globalized world. As cities strive to assert their uniqueness amidst growing competition and replication, effective branding strategies emerge as essential tools for revitalizing and projecting a city's identity.

Our findings highlight that city branding is not merely a marketing exercise but a comprehensive strategy that integrates cultural, historical, and social elements into a cohesive urban narrative. Through the examination of various branding strategies—including the promotion of geographical advantages, business opportunities, cultural events, and iconic architecture—we have demonstrated how these elements collectively contribute to the formation of a vibrant city identity. Moreover, the research indicates that a well-executed branding strategy can enhance a city's visual identity, fostering a positive perception among residents, investors, and tourists alike. Cities that successfully manage their branding initiatives not only attract economic investment but also cultivate a sense of pride and belonging among their inhabitants.

As urban environments continue to evolve, the implications of this study suggest that policymakers and urban planners must prioritize authentic branding efforts that reflect the intrinsic values and unique characteristics of their cities. By doing so, cities can navigate the complexities of globalization while preserving their distinct identities and cultural heritage. A matrix deduced theoretically to measure the effect of the application of city branding strategy on the city visual identity and how it can appear to the world table (3), where vertically the branding strategies mentioned in the paper are found and horizontally the components of the place identity. Each place identity component can be used and applied through one or more branding strategy to successfully achieve a specified city brand that expresses the city in each detail and achieve the city's message & visual identity. Starting with the non-physical components of the place identity, the cultural symbols (people, costume, tools, food, ...) ,implicit values (lifestyle, family, religion, traditions, ...) social activities and events (lifestyle, music, tools, festivals, ...) Also, the physical components of the place identity the whole city (buildings, interiors, products) and the nature of the city environment geography and climate. By emerging these components in the branding strategy, making it distinguishable and competitive in the global arena. When branding strategies intersect with place identity components—both physical and non-physical—the result is a distinct, memorable visible identity. So, these matrix will connect the city's assets, potentials and components and how it will be branded through the city branding strategies to be seen locally and internationally with its unique identity.

**A. Branding Location** Branding a location emphasizes its geographical uniqueness, leveraging its environmental characteristics and historical or cultural associations to create a memorable identity.

- **Integration with Place Identity:** Geography, climate, and natural landmarks serve as physical anchors, while cultural associations and heritage add depth. Geography and climate, combined with cultural symbols, become central. Ex: Maldives is branded as a luxury travel destination. Its pristine beaches (physical), tropical climate, and association with serenity (implicit values) define its identity, attracting millions of tourists annually.

**B. Branding Business :** This strategy emphasizes a city's economic dynamism and industrial achievements. This strategy aligns the city's identity with its economic or industrial prowess, showcasing its business environment as a key component of urban life. So, focusing on business branding highlights a city's economic strengths and opportunities.

- **Integration with Place Identity:** The branding emphasizes the tools, economic activities, and implicit values shaping the city's economy. **Example: Silicon Valley, USA** is synonymous with technological innovation. The

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branding revolves around its business culture (implicit value), tech startups (social activities), and iconic companies like Apple and Google (tools/products). **Shanghai, China**, promotes itself as a global financial hub, with its skyline (physical), bustling trade culture (implicit value), and thriving business districts like Lujiazui contributing to its identity.

- C. **Media-Generated Image** : Media-driven branding uses digital and traditional channels to shape perceptions of a city, often blending physical and non-physical components. Media-driven branding utilizes digital and traditional channels to project the city's identity globally. Media-generated branding uses film, social media, and other platforms to shape a city's global reputation.
- **Integration with Place Identity**: Amplifies the visibility of cultural symbols, implicit values, and social activities to a global audience. **Ex: New York City, USA**, is globally recognized for its portrayal in movies and media. Its skyline (physical), cultural diversity (implicit value), and vibrant city life are consistently highlighted, reinforcing its identity as the "city that never sleeps." Istanbul, Turkey: Turkish dramas often highlight its rich history and picturesque Bosphorus views. London, UK, utilizes media to highlight its double-decker buses (symbol), historical landmarks like the Tower of London (physical), and diverse cultural life, maintaining its visibility as a global city.
- D. **Branding City Life** : This strategy focuses on the unique ways people live and engage with the city. Branding City Life highlights the unique lifestyle ,ways of living that define a city, integrating implicit values like family, traditions, and everyday interactions within the city and captures the vibrancy of everyday interactions, cultural activities, and urban dynamics.
- **Integration with Place Identity**: The local lifestyle—seen in daily routines, festivals, and customs—becomes the foundation for branding. branding City Life incorporates implicit values, traditions, and modern living patterns. Elements like family traditions, religion, and modern lifestyles become the foundation of the brand. Music, festivals, and food contribute to a lively and dynamic perception of city life. **Ex: Barcelona, Spain**, leverages its nightlife, tapas culture, and festivals like La Mercè. The bustling social atmosphere (social activity) and historical streets (physical) shape its vibrant identity. **Ex: Copenhagen, Denmark**, is branded as the epitome of sustainable living. Cycling culture (lifestyle), environmental consciousness (implicit value), and hygge (comfort and coziness) are central to its identity. Renowned for sustainable living, cycling culture, and the hygge lifestyle. **Kyoto, Japan**: Celebrated for its serene tea ceremonies, Zen gardens, and preservation of Japanese traditions. **Barcelona, Spain**, leverages its nightlife, tapas culture, and festivals like La Mercè. The bustling social atmosphere (social activity) and historical streets (physical) shape its vibrant identity.
- E. **Branding Historical Buildings**: Historical buildings embody a city's legacy, connecting its past to its contemporary identity. Historical buildings connect the past with the present, embodying the legacy and cultural depth of a city.
- **Integration with Place Identity**: These structures preserve cultural heritage and reflect historical narratives. These structures preserve history (cultural symbol), reflect architectural traditions (physical), and foster a sense of belonging. Istanbul, Turkey: Hagia Sophia links Byzantine and Ottoman histories, embodying cultural and religious transitions. Cairo, Egypt: The Pyramids of Giza anchor Egypt's identity in its ancient civilization. Rome, Italy, uses the Colosseum as a core branding element. This ancient amphitheater (physical) tells stories of Roman history (cultural symbol) and anchors the city's identity as a center of heritage and civilization.
- F. **Branding Signature Architecture**: Iconic structures act as visual symbols, anchoring the city's identity in its physical environment. Signature architecture creates iconic visuals that define a city's skyline and identity. Signature buildings become emblematic, giving a city an instantly recognizable identity.
- **Integration with Place Identity**: Signature buildings become synonymous with the city, reflecting its history, culture, or aspirations. These structures highlight creativity and cultural relevance, becoming synonymous with the city. **Ex: Sydney Opera House, Australia**, exemplifies this strategy. Its unique design (physical) reflects Australia's creative culture (implicit value), while its use for global performances highlights its role in social activities. The Opera House is an emblem of creativity and global cultural significance. **Dubai, UAE**: Burj

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Khalifa symbolizes ambition and technological progress. **Bilbao, Spain:** The Guggenheim Museum revitalized the city, branding it as a cultural hub. **Eiffel Tower, Paris,** is a globally recognized icon that encapsulates French sophistication (implicit value) and innovation in design (physical component).

G. **Branding Urban Projects :** Urban projects can physically embody a city's identity, serving as symbols of its vision and aspirations. Urban development projects symbolize a city's ambitions and future-oriented vision. Urban projects are strategic tools to showcase a city's forward-looking aspirations and development.

- **Integration with Place Identity:** : These projects combine city form and cultural symbols, showcasing a commitment to growth and heritage. These projects highlight innovative urban design and cultural relevance. Urban projects merge physical development with cultural aspirations, often becoming symbols of innovation. Architectural marvels link to the city's culture, history, or aspirations. Ex: Dubai, UAE: Marina Bay Sands and Palm Jumeirah represent modernity and luxury. Dubai, UAE, is branded through projects like the Burj Khalifa. This structure (physical component) represents ambition and modernity, blending with the emirate's heritage of innovation and trade (cultural symbol). Singapore: Gardens by the Bay blends cutting-edge architecture with sustainable green technologies. Seoul, South Korea: The Cheonggyecheon Stream restoration transformed urban space, combining history and innovation. Singapore utilizes Marina Bay Sands as a branded urban project. Its iconic design (physical) and integration with green technologies (implicit value) align with the city-state's identity as a global innovation leader.

H. **Branding Urban Projects :** The layout and design of a city reflect its historical and cultural roots, offering a visual narrative of its evolution. City form branding reflects the urban layout and architectural harmony, often rooted in historical evolution. Branding city form focuses on the layout, design, and spatial character of urban environments.

- **Integration with Place Identity:** : Urban form becomes a physical artifact of culture and traditions, making the identity tangible. Urban morphology reflects historical evolution, cultural preferences, and social structures. The spatial character and aesthetic appeal tie the city's form to its identity. Ex: **Paris, France:** Haussmannian boulevards and historic landmarks create a cohesive and romantic city form. **Paris, France,** is iconic for its Haussmannian boulevards, romantic aesthetics, and historic landmarks. The uniform city form (physical) complements its association with art, romance, and elegance (implicit values). **Venice, Italy:** Canals and Renaissance architecture offer a unique spatial identity. **Brasília, Brazil:** Its modernist design and symmetry, conceived by Oscar Niemeyer, highlight planned urbanism. **Amsterdam, Netherlands,** is defined by its concentric canal network (physical), blending aesthetic appeal with functional city planning. This form reinforces its identity as a charming, livable city.

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**Table 3: theoretical matrix to test the effect of the branding strategies on the place identity.**

Analytical matrix								
Place Identity City Branding Strategies	Non-physical		Physical					
	Cultural Symbols and implicit values	Social activities and events	Built environment				Natural environment	
			The city	buildings	interiors	products	Geographical factors	Climate factors
Branding Location								
Branding Business								
Media-Generated Image								
Branding City Life								
Branding Historical Buildings								
Signature Architecture								
Branding Urban Projects								
Branding City Form								

Source 1: The Researcher.

## 5. Conclusion

City branding strategies effectively bring place identity to life by integrating physical elements, such as buildings, geography, and city form, with non-physical attributes like culture, values, and lifestyle. This intersection ensures cities project distinct, authentic, and globally competitive identities. Incorporating historical buildings adds depth, linking contemporary urban identities with their rich heritage and providing a tangible connection to the past. By leveraging these diverse components, cities craft holistic narratives that resonate with both residents and visitors. International examples demonstrate how such strategies successfully revitalize urban identity, making it visible and impactful. These efforts highlight the potential of branding as a transformative tool for cultural preservation and economic growth. A well-executed branding strategy not only celebrates a city’s uniqueness but also strengthens its position in a competitive global landscape. The blend of tradition and modernity fosters an identity that is both aspirational and rooted in local character. Through these efforts, cities create lasting impressions that align with their vision and values. Ultimately, branding strategies ensure urban identities are dynamic, meaningful, and enduring.

The dynamic interplay between city branding and identity underscores the importance of strategic branding as a vehicle for urban revitalization. Future research should further investigate the long-term effects of branding initiatives on urban development and community engagement, providing a deeper understanding of how cities can effectively navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by a rapidly changing global landscape.

- City branding is essential for differentiating urban areas in a globalized world.
- Effective branding strategies help cities assert their uniqueness amidst competition.

### 2. Integration of Elements:

- Branding is not just marketing; it incorporates cultural, historical, and social elements.
- Successful branding creates a cohesive urban narrative that reflects a city’s identity.

### 3. Impact on Visual Identity:

- Well-executed branding enhances a city's visual identity and public perception.
- Positive branding attracts residents, investors, and tourists.

### 4. Economic and Community Benefits:

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- Strategic branding fosters economic investment and enhances community pride.
  - Cities that manage branding effectively cultivate a strong sense of belonging.
5. **Policy and Planning Implications:**
- Policymakers should prioritize authentic branding efforts that reflect city values.
  - Emphasis on preserving cultural heritage while promoting growth is crucial.
6. **Future Research Directions:**
- Further studies should explore the long-term effects of branding on urban development.
  - Investigate community engagement in branding initiatives to enhance effectiveness.

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